
Asia at the Door. A Study of the Japanese Question in Continental United States, Hawaii and Canada by
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Asia at the Door. A Study of the Japanese Question in Continental United States, Hawaii and Canada. By KIYOSHI K. KAWAKAMI. New York: Fleming H. Revell. 1914. Pp. 269.

The most important question of the Pacific is the relation of the two nations that dominate it and the tension in that relation which is fast making, if it has not already made the United States the "most hated nation" in Japan. It is well to view the problem from all points of view and the contribution of a Japanese who is at the same time an American ought to be of value.

Mr. Kawakami insists, as do all writers who have studied the question from the Japanese angle that discriminations against the Japanese on account of race and color ought to be done away with and they should be admitted on the same terms as the immigrants of other nations; and he considers that even if the bars were let down that the Japanese government would continue the restriction on emigration just as long as Japanese immigrants were considered undesirable in the United States. In regard to that suggestion, it is interesting to note that the Japanese leaders in Hawaii attempted to stop the steady flow of Japanese emigration from the islands to the mainland of the United States, which resulted in the prohibition in 1907 of such emigration. As a solution of the Californian problem, he proposes the naturalization of the Japanese, who as a general rule show an unusual desire to learn the English language and to become American citizens. And on the other hand their restriction from becoming citizens is a menace because they constitute a floating, unstable element in our body politic. It was the threat of naturalization that enabled President Roosevelt to control the California situation and so far has been the only solution proposed that would bring under national control this question of international importance.

Considerable space is given to the Japanese schools in order to refute the charge that they tend to make the children disloyal to their new country. In the United States these schools are merely supplementary to the public school system, "established to instruct Japanese children in the language, history, and ethics of the Mikado's Empire." The same holds true of the Japanese schools in Hawaii, though there the problem is complicated by the more pronounced activity of the Buddhists whose tendency is to propagate loyalty to Japan along with faith in Buddha.

In Canada the case is quite different for, since there is no compulsory school system, the Japanese schools furnish the complete education of their children, who are thus given little chance to learn English and to absorb Canadian ideas and customs.

With regard to the Japanese in California, the author emphasizes the fact that, while the Japanese in large numbers, devote themselves to agriculture, they are not in the main displacing the Americans on the farms, but are occupying land that has been considered too poor for cultivation and are developing lines of farming to which Americans are not adapted, such as berry and vegetable picking and celery culture.

An interesting chapter is devoted to the Japanese labor situation in Hawaii. The early history of Japanese immigration shows that it has always been induced immigration and has been for the most part discouraged by the Japanese government because of the poor labor conditions in Hawaii. The great strike of 1909 had unfortunately to be drawn on racial lines because the ill-treatment was accorded on racial lines, the Japanese demand being that they should receive the same wages for the same work as the Portuguese and Porto Ricans. The strike was on the whole a failure but it has done something toward improving conditions on the plantations. The Japanese are by far the most numerous of the races in Hawaii, and, though immigration is practically forbidden and there is much emigration back to Japan or of American citizens to the United States, the fecundity of the Japanese is such that there seems no chance of a diminishing population, while their only rival in point of numbers are the Portuguese whose immigration is being actively encouraged.

The book as a whole presents the Japanese point of view in an unprejudiced manner and if Hawaii is able to solve a much more complex race problem, making a state which is "absolutely American, not only in its affiliations, but also in the very fibre of its thought," it seems reasonable that the United States can assimilate the much smaller number of Orientals within her boundaries.

A Study of the Thlingets of Alaska. By LIVINGSTON F. JONES.
New York: Fleming H. Revell. 1914. Pp. 261.

The natives of Alaska fall into four great divisions, the Thlingets of southern Alaska, the Tinneh of the interior, the Aleuts of the southwestern panhandle, and the Eskimos inhabiting the shores of Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean. It is with the Thlingets, who live in the vicinity of Tongass, Wrangell, Sitka, and Haines.